A

Confession of my Faith,

And

A Reason of my Practice:

OR,

With who, and who not, I can hold *Church-fellowship*, or the *Communion of Saints*.

Shewing,

By diverse Arguments, that though I dare not Communicate with the open Prophane, yet I can with those visible Saints that differ about

WATER-BAPTISM.

Wherein

Is also discoursed whether that be the entring Ordinance into Fellowship, or no.

I believed and therefore have I spoken.
Psal. 116. 10.

London, Printed for *Francis Smith*, at the *Elephant* and *Castle* without *Temple-bar*, 1674.

TO THE READER.

SIR,

I *Marvail not that both your ſelf, and others do think my long Impriſonment ſtrange (or rather ſtrangely of me for the ſake of that) for verily I ſhould alſo have done it my ſelf, had not the Holy Ghoſt long ſince forbidden me.* 1 Pet. 4, 12. 1 Joh. 3. 13. *Nay verily that notwithſtanding, ad the adverſary but faſtened the ſuppoſition of guilt upon me; my long tryalls might by this time have put it beyond diſpute: for I have not hitherto been ſo ſordid, as to ſtand to a Doctrine right or*

wrong; much leſs when ſo weighty an argument, as above eleven years impriſonment, is continually dogging of me to weigh and pauſe, and pauſe again, the grounds and foundation of thoſe principles, for which I thus have ſuffered: but having not only at my tryall aſſerted them, but alſo ſince, even all this tedious tract of time, in cool blood, a thouſand times by the word of God examined them, and found them good; I cannot, I dare not now revolt or deny the ſame, on pain of eternal damnation.

And that my principles, and practice may be open to the view and judgment of all men (though they ſtand, and fall to none but the word of God alone) I have in this ſmall treatiſe preſented to this gene-

generation, A Confession of my Faith, and a Reason of my Practise in the Worship of God; *by which although it be brief; Candid Christians, may I hope, without a violation to faith or love, judge, I may have the root of the matter found in me.*

Neither have I in this relation abusively presented my Reader, with other doctrine or practices, then what I held, professed, and preached when apprehended, and cast in Prison. Nor did I then, or now retain a Doctrine besides, or which is not thereon grounded. The Subject I should have Preached upon, even then when the Constable came, was, Dost thou believe on the Son of God? *from whence I intended to shew, the absolute need of Faith in Jesus*

Christ; *and that it was also a thing of the highest concern, for men to inquire into, and to ask their own hearts whether they had it or no.*

Faith, and Holiness, are my professed principles, with an endeavour, so far as in me lyeth, to be at peace with all men. What shall I say, let mine enemies themselves be judges, if any thing in these following doctrines, or if ought that any Man hath heard me preach, doth, or hath according to the true intent of my words, savoured either of heresie of rebellion. I say again, let they themselves be judges, if ought they find in my writing or preaching, doth render me worthy of almost twelve years imprisonment, or one that deserveth to be hanged, or banished

for

for ever, according to their tremendous Sentence. Indeed my principles are such, as lead me to a denial to communicate in the things of the Kingdom of Christ, with ungodly and open prophane; neither can I in, or by the superstitious inventions of this world, consent that my Soul should be governed, in any of my approaches to God, because commanded to the contrary, and commended for so refusing. Wherefore excepting this one thing, for which I ought not to be rebuked; I shall I trust in despite of slander and falsehood, discover my self at all times a peaceable, and an obedient Subject. But if nothing will do, unless I make of my conscience a continual butchery, and slaughter-shop, unless putting out my own eyes I com-

commit me to the blind to lead me, (as I doubt is desired by some) I have determined the Almighty God being my help, and shield, yet to suffer, if frail life might continue so long, even till the moss shall grow on mine eye-browes rather then thus to violate my faith and principles. Will a man leave the Snow of Lebanon, *that cometh from the rock of the field? or shall the cold flowing waters, that come from another place be forsaken?* Jer. 18. 14. Hath a Nation changed their Gods which yet are no Gods? For all People will walk every one in the name of his God, and we will walk in the name of the Lord our God for ever and ever. *Micah* 4. 5.

Touching my Practice as to Communion with visible Saints, al-

though

though not Baptized with water; I say, it is my present Judgement so to do, and am willing to render a farther reason thereof; shall I see the leading hand of God thereto.

Thine in Bonds
for the Gospel.

J. B.

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A.

Confession of my Faith; and a reason of my practice in worship, &c.

I believe, that there is but one, onely true God, and there is none other but he. *To us there is but one God the Father of whom are all things. And this is life eternal that they might know thee, the only true God*, &c. *Mar.* 12. 32. 1 *Cor.* 8. 8. *Joh.* 17. 3. *Acts.* 17. 24.

2. I believe, that this God is Almighty, Eternal, Invisible, Incomprehensible, &c. *I am the Almighty God, walk before me and be thou perfect. The eternall God is thy refuge.*

 Now

Now unto the king eternall, Immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Gen. 17. 1. Deut. 33. 26, 27. 1 Tim. 1. 17. Job. 11. 7. Rom. 11. 33.

3. I believe, that this God is unspeakably perfect in all his attributes of power, wisdom, justice, truth, holyness, mercy, love, *&c.* his power is said to be *eternall*, his understanding and wisdom, *infinite*; he is called the *just Lord* in opposition to all things; he is said to be truth it self and the God thereof: There is none holy as the Lord. *God is love. Canst thou by searching find out God; canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?* Rom. 1. 20. Psa. 147. 5. Zeph. 3. 5. 2 Thes. 2. 10. Deut. 32. 4 Job. 11. 7.

4. I believe that in the Godhead, there are *three persons* or subsistances. *There are three that bare record in heaven. The Father, the Word, and the*

the holy Ghost. 1 Joh. 5. 7. see also, Gen. 1. 26. chap. 3. 22. chap. 11. 7. and Esa. 6. 8.

5. I believe, that these three are in Nature, Essence, and Eternity, *equally one. These three are one.* 1 Joh. 5. 7.

6. I believe, *there is a World to come.* Heb. 2. 5. chap. 6. 5.

7. I believe, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just, and unjust. *Many that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to everlasting shame and contempt. Marvail not at this. For the hour is coming, in the which all that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth, they that have done good, to the resurrection of life, and they that have done evill, to the resurrection of Damnation.* Act. 24. 15. Dan. 12. 2. Joh. 5. 28.

8. I believe, that they that shall be counted worthy of that world, and

of the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage, neither can they dye any more, *for they are equall to the Angels, and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.* Luk. 10.34. 35,36. Joh. 10. 27,28,29. Rev. 7. 16. chap. 20. 6.

9. I believe, that those that dye impenitent, shall be tormented with the Divel and his Angels, and shall be cast with them into the Lake that burns with fire and brimstone, *where their worm dyeth not, and the fire is not quenched.* Rev. 21.8. Mar.9.43. 48. Mat. 25 41. 46. Joh. 5. 29.

10. I believe, that because God is naturally holy and just, even as he is Good and Mercifull, therefore (all having sinned) none can be saved, *without the means of a redeemer. Then he is gracious unto him, and saith, deliver him from going down to the pit, I have found a ransome. We have redemption through his blood, even the*

for-

forgiveness of our sins. For which out shedding of blood, is no remission, Job. 33. 24. Col. 1. 14. Hebr. 9. 22.

11. I believe, that Jesus Christ our Lord himself is the redeemer. *They remembred that God was their rock, and the high God their redeemer. Forasmuch as ye know, that ye were not redeemed, with corruptible things, as silver and Gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your Fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish, and without spot.* Psa. 78. 35. 1 Pet. 1. 18, 19.

12. I believe, that the great reason why the Lord, the second person in the God-head, did cloth himself with our flesh and blood, was that he might be capable of obtaining the redemption, that before the world, was intended for us. *Forasmuch then as the children were made partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same;* (mark)

that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the Divel, and deliver them who through fear of death, were all their life time subject to bondage. When the fulness of the time was Come, God sent forth his Son made of a woman, made under the Law to redeem them that were under the Law. Wherefore it behooved him in all things to be made like unto his brethren; that he might be a merciful, and faithfull high priest in things pertaining to God; To make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able also to succour them that are tempted. Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us. As it is written cursed is every one that is hanged on a tree. That the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles, through faith in Jesus Christ. Heb. 2. 14, 15. Gal. 4. 4. Heb. 2. 17, 18. Gal. 3. 13, 14.

13. I believe, that the time when he clothed himself with our flesh, was in the dayes of the reign of *Cæsar Augustus*; then, I say, and not till then, was the word made flesh, or clothed with our nature. *And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from* Cæsar Augustus, *that all the world should be taxed; And Joseph went up from Galilee, out of the City of Nazareth unto Judah, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; because he was of the house and linage of David, to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife being great with child; And so it was, that while they were there, the dayes were accomplished, that she should be delivered. This child was he of whom godly Simeon was told by the holy Ghost, when he said, That he should not see death untill he had seen the Lord Christ.* Joh 1. 14. 1 Tim. 3. 16. Luk. 2. 1, 2, 3. 6. 25, 26, 27.

14. I believe, therefore that this very child, as afore is testifiied, is both God and man; the Christ of the living God. *And she brought forth her first born son, and wrapt him in swadling clothes, and laid him in a manger; Because there was no room for them in the inn. And there were in the same Countrey shepheards keeping watch over their flock by night, And Lo, the Angel of the Lord came upon them, and the Glory of the Lord shined round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the Angel said unto them fear not; for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the City of David, a saviour, which is Christ the Lord.*

And this shall be a sign unto you; you shall find the babe wrapped in swadling clothes lying in a manger. Again. But while he thought on these things, behold the Angel of the Lord appeared unto him; saying, Joseph, thou son of David,

David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying; Behold a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel, which being interpreted is God with us. Luk. 2. 7 12. Mat. 1. 21, 22.

15. I believe, therefore that the righteousness, and redemption, by which we, that believe, stand just before God, as saved from the curse of the Law, is the righteousness, and redemption, that consists in the personal acts, & performances of this child Jesus, this God man the Lord Christ: it consisteth, I say, in his personal fulfilling the law for us, to the utmost requirement of the justice of God. *Do not think*

think (said he) that I am come to destroy the Law, or the Prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. By which means he became the end of the Law for righteousnes to every one that believeth. *For what the Law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh; God sending his own son in the likeness of sinfull flesh, and and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.* So finishing transgressions and making an end of sins, and making reconciliation for iniquity, *he brought in everlasting righteousnes.* Math. 5. 17. Rom. 10. 3. chap. 8, 3. 1 Joh. 3. 8. 2 Tim. 1 9. Hebr. 10. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 0, Dan. 9. 24.

16. I believe, that for the compleating of this work, he was alwayes sinles; did alwayes the things that pleased God's Justice, that every one of his acts, both of doing and suffering, and rising again from the dead, was really and infinitely perfect, being done by him as God-man: Where-

fore

fore his acts before he dyed, are called, *the righteousness of God*, his blood, *the blood of God*; and *herein perceive we the love of God in that he laid down his life for us*. The Godhead which gave vertue to all the acts of the humane nature, was then in perfect union with it, when he hanged upon the cross for our sins. Heb. 4. 15. chap. 7. 26,27,28. Joh. 8. 29. & 10. 30. Rom. 3. 21, 22. Act. 20. 28. 1 Joh. 3. 16. Joh. 20,28. Rom. 1. 4.

17. I believe, then that the righteousness that saveth the sinner from the wrath to come, is properly and personally Christs, and ours but as we have union with him; God by grace imputing it to us. *Yea doubtless, and I count all things loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having my own righ-*

righteousness, which is of the Law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith. For of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. For he hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. Phil. 3, 8, 9. 1 Cor. 1. 30. 2 Cor. 5. 20, 21.

18. I believe, that God, as the reward of Christs undertakings for us, hath exalted him to his own right hand, as our mediatour, and given him a name above every name; and hath made him Lord of all, and judge of quick and dead: and all this that we who believe might take courage to believe, and hope in God. *And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself unto death, even the death of the cross,* (where he dyed for our sins) *wherefore God hath highly exalted*

alted him; and given him a name above every name; That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, both of things in heaven, and things in earth, & things that are under the earth. And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify, that it was he that was ordained of God to be the judge of quick and dead. Who verily was foreordained, before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, who by him do believe in God, who raised him from the dead, and gave him glory that your faith and hope might be in God, Ph. 2. 5.——10. Eph. 1. 18,——22. Act. 10. 42. ch. 17. 31. 1 Pet. 1. 19, 20, 21.

19. I believe, that being on the right hand of God in heaven, he doth there effectually exercise the office of his excellent priesthood, and mediatorship, presenting himself continually

tinually before God, in the righteousnes which is accomplished for us, when he was in the world. For by the efficacy of his blood, he not onely went into the holy place, but being there, and having by it obtained eternal redemption for us; now, as receiving the worth and merit thereof from the Father; doth bestow upon us grace, repentance, faith, and the remission of sins: Yea he also received for us, the holy Ghost to be sent unto us, to ascertain us of our adoption and Glory: *For if he were on earth he should not be a Priest; seeing then we have a great high priest, that is entred into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God. Let us hold fast our profession. For there is one God, and one mediatour between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. For by his own blood he entred into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For Christ is not entred into the holy places made with hands, which*

are

are the figure of the true; but into heaven it self, now to appear in the presence of God for us. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted; and having received of the Father, the promise of the holy Ghost; he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear. Hebr. 8. 4. 1 Tim. 2 5. Hebr. 9. 12. 24. Act. 5. 31. chap. 2 33.

20. I believe, that being there, he shall so continue till the restitution of all things, and then he shall come again in Glory, and shall sit in judgment upon all flesh. And I believe; that according to his sentence, so shall their judgment be. *Repent ye therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out when the times of refreshing shall come, from the presence of the Lord; and he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you whom the heaven must receive, until the restitution of all things, spoken of by the mouth of all the holy prophets, since the world began. For this*

same

same Jesus which ye have seen go up into heaven, shall so come, in like manner, as ye have seen him go into heaven. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voyce of the Arch-angel, and the trumphet of God, &c. When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy Angels with him, then he shall sit upon the throne of his Glory. And before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepheard divideth his sheep from the Goats. And he shall set his sheep on his right hand, but the Goats on the left. Then shall the King say to them on his right hand, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Then shall he say to them on the left hand, Depart from me ye Cursed into everlasting fire prepared for the Divel and his Angels; And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into

life

life eternal. For the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burnt up. Seeing then that all these things must be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation, and godliness; looking for and hastening unto the coming of the day of God. Wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat. Act. 3. 19,20,21. 1 Thes. 4, 16. Act. 1. 11. Mat. 25. 31, 32, 33. 41. 46. 2 Pet. 3. 10, 11, 12.

21. I believe that when he comes, his saints shall have a reward of grace, for all their work and labour of Love which they shewed to his name in the world. *And every man shall receive his own reward, according to his own labour. And then shall every man have praise of God. And behold I*

come

come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give to every man according as his work shall be. Wherefore my beloved brethren, be stedfast, unmoveable always abounding in the work of the Lord; forasmuch as ye know your labour is not in vain in the Lord, Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of inheritance, for you serve the Lord Christ, 1 Cor. 3. 8. chap. 4. 5. Rev. 22. 12. 1 Cor. 15, 58. Col 3, 24.

How

How Christ is made ours; or by what means this or that man, hath that benefit by him, as to stand just before God now, and in the day of judgement.

1. I believe, we being sinfull Creatures in our selves, that no good thing done by us, can procure of God the imputation of the righteousness of Jesus Christ. But that the imputation thereof, *is an act of grace*, a freegift without our deserving. *Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ. He called us, and saved us, with an holy calling; Not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus.* Rom. 3. 24. chap. 5. 17. 2 Tim. 1 9. *Of justification.*

2. I believe also, that the power of imputing righteousness resideth onely

onely in God by Christ: 1, Sin being the transgression of the Law; 2. The soul that hath sinned, being his creature, and the righteousness also his, and his onely. *Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, to whom God imputeth righteousness without works; saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sin is covered; Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.* Hence therefore it is said again, *that men shall abundantly utter the memory of his great goodness, and sing of his righteousness. For he saith in Moses, I will have mercy, on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion, on whom I will have compassion, So then, it is not in him that willeth, nor in him that runneth, but in God that sheweth mercy.* Rom. 4. 6, 7. Psal. 145. 7, Rom. 9. 15, 16.

3. I believe, that the offer of this righteousness, as tendered in the Gospell, is to be received by faith.

we

we ſtill in the very act of receiving it, judging our ſelves ſinners in our ſelves. *Oh wretched man that I am! who ſhall deliver me from the body of this death. I thank God through Jeſus Chriſt. Believe in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and thou ſhalt be ſaved. The Goſpel is preached in all nations for the obedience of faith. Being juſtified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jeſus Chriſt: whom God hath ſet forth to be a propitiation (a ſacrifice to appeaſe the diſpleaſure of God) through faith in his blood. To declare his righteouſneſs for the remiſſion of ſins that are paſt through the forbearance of God; to declare I ſay, at this time his righteouſneſs; that he might be juſt, and the juſtifyer of him that believeth on Jeſus. Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveneſs of ſins; And by him all that believe are juſtifyed from all things, from which they could not*

be

be justified by the law of Moses. Rom. 7. 24. Act. 16. 31. Rom 3. 24. 25. Act. 13. 38, 39.

4. I believe, that this faith, as it respecteth the imputation of this righteousnes, for justification before God; doth put forth it self in such acts, *as purely respect the offer of a gift.* It receiveth, accepteth of, imbraceth, or trusteth to it. *As many as received him to them he gave power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name. This is a faithfull saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the Gospell of your salvation: In whom also after that ye believed ye were sealed with the holy spirit of promise.* I believe therefore, that as to my justification from the curse of the Law, I am, as I stand in my self, ungodly, to receive accept of, imbrace, and trust to this

righteousness, that is already provided by, and wrapt up in the personal doings and sufferings of Christ: it being faith in that, and that onely, that can justify a sinner in the sight of God. Joh. 1. 12. 1 Tim. 1. 15. Heb. 11. 13. Eph. 1. 13.

5. I believe, that the faith that so doth is not to be found with any but those, in whom the Spirit of God by mighty power doth work it; all others being fearfull and incredulous, dare not venture their souls and eternity upon it. And hence it is called the faith that is wrought by the *exceeding great and mighty power of God*: The faith *of the operation of God*. And hence it is that others are said to be *fearfull*, and so unbelieving. These with other ungodly sinners *must have their part in the lake of fire*. Eph. 1. 18, 19. Col. 2. 12. Eph. 2. 8. Phil. 1. 19. Rev. 21. 8.

6. I believe, that this faith is effectually wrought in none, but those

which

which before the world, were appointed unto Glory. *And as many as were ordained unto eternal life believed. That he might make known the riches of his Glory, upon the vessels of mercy, which he had before prepared unto Glory. We give thanks unto God alwayes for you all, making mention alwayes of you in our prayers; remembring without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the sight of God; knowing brethren, beloved, your election of God,* But of the rest he saith, ye believed not because ye are not of my sheep, as I said, which latter words, relate to the 16. *v.* which respecteth the election of God. Joh. 10. 26.

Therefore they could not believe, because Esaias said again: he hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their hearts that they should not see with their eyes; nor understand with their heart, and I should heal them.

A.C.

Act. 13. 48. Rom. 9. 23. 1 Thes. 1. 2, 3, 4. Joh. 10. 26. chap. 12, 38, 39, 40.

Of Election.

1. I believe that Election is free and permanent, being founded in *Grace*, and the unchangeable will of God. *Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of Grace: And if by Grace, then it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more of grace, otherwise work is no more work. Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this Seal, the Lord knoweth who are his. In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated, according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.* Rom. 11. 5, 6.

2 Tim. 2. 19. Eph. 1. 11.

2. I believe that this decree, choyce or election, was before the foundation of the world; and so before the elect themselves, had being in themselves; For God who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those *things* which be not as though they were, stayes not *for the being of things*, to determine his eternal purpose by; but having all things present to, and in his wisdome, he made his choice before the world was. Rom. 4. 17. *Eph.* 1. 4. 2 *Tim.* 1. 9.

3. I believe, that the decree of election is so far off, from making works in us foreseen, the ground or cause of the choyce, that it containeth in the bowels of it, not onely the persons, but the graces that accompany their salvation. And hence it is, that it is said, *We are predestinated to be conformed to the image of his son*; not because we *are*, but, that we *should be holy and without blame*

before

before him in love. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus, unto Good workes, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. He blessed us according as he chose us in Christ. And hence it is again that the salvation and calling of which we are now made partakers, is no other then what was *given us in Christ Jesus before the world began*; according to his eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord. *Eph.* 1. 3, 4. *chap.* 2 10. *chap.* 3. 8, 9, 10, 11. 2 *Tim.* 1. 9. *Rom* 8. 26.

4 I believe that Christ Jesus is he in whom the elect are alwayes considered, and that without him there is neither election, Grace, nor salvation. *Having predestinated us to the adoption of children, by Jesus Christ to himself: according the good pleasure of his will: to the praise of the glory of his grace: Wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved, In whom we*

have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace. That in the dispensation of the fullness of times, he might gather together in one, all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are in earth even in him. Neither is their salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. Eph. 1. 5, 6, 7. 10. Act. 4. 12.

5. I believe, that there is not any impediment attending the election of God, that can hinder their conversion, and eternal salvation. *Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified, and whom he justified, them he also glorified: what shall we say to these things; if God be for us, who can be against us? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifyeth: who is he that condemneth?* &c.

What

What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded. For Israel hath not been forsaken, nor Judah of his God, of the Lord of hosts; though their land was filled with sin, against the holy one of Israel. When *Ananias* made intercession against *Saul*, saying, Lord I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem, and here he hath authority from the high-priest to bind all that call upon thy name. What said God unto him? *Go thy way, for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and Kings, and the children of Israel,* Rom. 8. 30, 31, 32, 33, 34. chap. 11. 7. Jer. 51. 5. Act. 9. 12, 13, 14, 15.

6 I believe that no man can know his election, *but by his calling.* The vessels of mercy, which God afore prepared unto Glory, do thus claim

a share therein: *Even us, say they, whom he hath called, not onely of the Jews, but also of the Gentiles; As he also saith in Osee; I will call them my people, which were not my people, and her beloved, which was not beloved.* Rom. 9. 23, 24, 5

7 I believe therefore, that election doth not forestall or prevent the means which are of God appointed to bring us to Christ, to grace and glory; but rather putteth a necessity upon the use and effect thereof; because they are chosen to be brought to heaven that way: that is by the faith of Jesus Christ, which is the end of effectual calling. *Wherefore the rather brethren give diligence to make your calling and election sure.* 2 Thes. 2. 13, 1 Pet. 1. 12, 2 Pet. 1. 10.

Of Calling.

1. I believe, that to effectual Calling the holy Ghost must accompany the word of the Gospel, and that with mighty power: I mean that calling, which of God is made to be the fruit of electing love. *I know* saith *Paul*, to the Thessalonians, *brethren, beloved your election of God; for our Gospell came not unto you in word onely; but also in power, and in the holy Ghost, and in much assurance*, &c, 1 Thes. 1. 4. 8. Otherwise men will not, cannot, hear and turn. *Samuell* was called *four* times, before he knew the voice of him that spake from heaven. It is said of them in *Hosea*, That as the Prophets called them so they went from them; And instead of turning to them, *sacrificed to Balaam, and burnt incense to Graven Images.* 1 Sam 4. 6. 10. Hos. 11.

11. 2. The reason is, because men by nature, are not only dead in sins, *but enemys in their minds by reason of wicked works*: The call then is; *Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.* Eph. 5. 14. Understand; therefore that effectual calling is like that word of Christ that raised *Lazarus* from the dead: A word attended with an arm, that was omnipotent. *Lazarus come forth*: was a word to the dead; but not onely so: It was a word for the dead; a word that raised him from the dead; a word that outwent all opposition; and that brought him forth of the grave, though bound hand and foot therein. *Joh.* 11. 43. *Eph.* 2 1, 2. *Heb.* 10. 32. *Gal.* 1. 15. *Act.* 9. And hence it is that calling, is sometimes expressed by quickening, awakening, illuminating, or bringing them forth of darkness to light that amazeth, and astonisheth them. For

as it is a strange thing for a man that lay long dead, or never saw the light with his eyes, to be raised out of the grave, or to be made to see that which he could not so much as once think of before, so it is with effectual calling 1 Pet. 2. 9. Hence it is that *Paul*, when called, stood *trembling and was astonished*: and that *Peter* saith, *he hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light* Eph. 4. 21. Act. 7. 2. In effectual calling the voyce of God is heard, and the gates of heaven are opened: when God called *Abraham*, he appeared to him in glory. Oh that of *Ananias* to *Saul* is experienced but by few. *The God of our Fathers hath chosen thee*, saith he, *that thou shouldest know his will, and see that just one, and shouldest hear the voyce of his mouth.* Act. 22. 14. True; *Sauls* call was out of the ordinary way, but yet as to the matter, and truth of the work, twas no other

then

then all the chosen have, *viz.*

1. An effectual awakening about the evil of sin, and especially of unbelief. *Joh.* 16. 9. And therefore when the Lord God called *Adam*, he also made unto him, an effectual discovery of sin; insomuch that he stript him of all his righteousness. *Gen.* 3. Thus he also served the Gealer. Yea it is such an awakening, as by it, he sees he was without Christ, without hope, and a stranger to the common-wealth of *Israel*, and without God in the word. *Act.* 16. 29, 30. *Eph.* 2. 12. Oh the dread and amazement that the guilt of sin brings with it, when tis revealed by the God of heaven: and like to it is the sight of mercy, when it pleaseth God, *who calleth us by his grace, to reveal his son in us.*

2. In effectual calling, there is great awakenings about the world to come, and the glory of unseen things; the resurrection of the dead; and eternal

eternal judgement; The salvation that God hath prepared for them that love him; with the blessedness that will attend us, and be upon us, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, are great things in the soul that is under the awakening calls of God. And hence we are said to be *called to Glory, to the obtaining of the Glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.* 1 Thes. 2. 12. 2 Thes. 2. 13 14.

3. In effectual calling, there is also a sanctifying vertue; And hence we are said to be called with an holy calling, with an heavenly calling: Called to glory and vertue. *But ye are a chosen Generation, a royall priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that you should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.* Heb. 3. 1. 1 Thes. 4. 7. 1 Pet. 1. 8, 9. Yea effectual calling hath annexed to it, as its unseparable companion, the promise of through sanctification. *Faithfull is he that hath*

called

called you, who also will do it. 1 Thes. 5 22 23, 24.

2. I believe, that effectual calling doth therefore produce, 1. *Faith*; and therefore it is said, that faith cometh by hearing; by hearing the word that calleth us unto the grace of Christ. For by the word that calleth us is Jesus Christ held forth to us; and offered to be our righteousness; and therefore the Apostle saith again, *that God hath called us unto the fellowship of his son Jesus Christ*; that is to be made partakers of the riches of grace, and the righteousness that is in him. *Rom.* 10. 17. *Gal.* 1. 6. 1 *Cor.* 1. 9.

2. It produceth hope; It giveth a ground to hope; and therefore hope is said to be the *hope of our calling*. And again, *Even as you are called in one hope of your calling*. Eph. 1. 18, 19. chap. 4. 4. Now the Godly wise know, whoso misseth of effectual calling, misseth of eternal life; because

cauſe God juſtifyeth none but them whom he calleth; and glorifyes none but thoſe whom he juſtifyes: And therefore it is that *Peter* ſaid before, *Make your calling, and (ſo) your election ſure*: make it ſure, that is prove your calling right, by the word of God. For whoſo ſtaggereth at the certainty of his calling, cannot comfortably hope for a ſhare in eternal life. *Remember the word unto thy ſervant, whereon thou haſt cauſed me to hope. My ſoul fainted for thy ſalvation, but I hope in thy word.* Pſa. 119. 49. 81.

3. It produceth repentance; For when a man hath heaven, and hell before his eyes, (as he will have if he be under the power of effectual calling) or when a man hath a revelation of the mercy and juſtice of God, with an heart-drawing invitation, to lay hold on the tender forgiveneſs of ſins; and being made alſo to behold the goodly beauty of holineſs;

it

it must needs be, that repentance appears, and puts forth it self, unto self-revenging acts, for all its wickedness which in the dayes of ignorance, it delighted in. And hence is that saying, *I came not to call the righteous but sinners to Repentance.* For the effecting of which, the preaching of the word of the Kingdom, is most proper: *Repent for the Kingdom of God is at hand.* Mar. 2. 17. chap. 1. 10.

1. Repentane is a turning the heart to God in Christ: a turning of it from sin, and the Divel, and darkness; to the goodness and grace, and holyness that is in him. Wherefore they that of old are said to repent are said to loath, and abhor themselves, for all their abominations. *I abhor my self, said* Iob, *and repent in dust, and ashes.* Ezek. 6. 9. chap. 2. 43. chap. 36. 31. Job. 42. 5, 6. Ezek. 16. *v.* last. *Of Repentance.*

2. God-

2. Godly repentance: doth not onely affect the soul with the loathsome nature of sin that is past; but filleth the heart with godly hatred of sins that yet may come; When *Moses* feared that through his being overburthened, with the care of the children of *Israel*, some unruly, or sinfull passions might shew themselves in him; what saith he? *I beseech thee kill me out of hand, if I have found grace in thy sight, and let me not see my wretchedness.* Num. 14.13,14,15.

See also, how that, that *Paul* calleth godly repentance, wrought in the upright *Corinthians*. *Behold* saith he, *this self same thing that ye sorrowed after a Godly sort; what carefulness it wrought in you? what clearing of your selves? yea what fear? yea what vehement desire, yea what zeal, yea what revenge? In all things you have approved your selves to be clear in this matter.* 2 Cor. 7. 9, 10, 11.

4. It,

4. It produceth also Love: Wherefore *Paul* when he had put the church in remembrance that they were called of God; addes, That concerning brotherly Love, *Of Love.* they had no need that he should write unto them. 1 Thes. 4. 17. 19. As who should say, If God be so kind to us, to forgive us our sins, to save our souls, and to give us the kingdom of heaven; let these be motives beyond all other, to provoke us to love again. Farther; If we that are thus beloved of God, are made members of one mans body, all partakers of his grace; clothed all with his glorious righteousnes; and are together appointed to be the children of the next world; why should we not love one another? *Beloved, if God so loved us we ought also to love one another.* 1 Joh 4. 11. And truly so we shall, if the true grace of God be upon us; because we also see them to be the called of Jesus.

Travel-

Travellers, that are of the same countrey, love, and take pleasure one in another, when they meet in a strange Land; why? we sojourn here in a strange countrey; with them that are heirs together with us of the promised kingdom and glory. Heb. 11. 9. Now as I said, this holy love, worketh by love; Mark, Love in God, and Christ, when discovered, constraineth us to love. 2 Cor. 5. 14.

The name, therefore, and word, and truth of God in Christ, together with the sincerity of Grace, of faith, and holyness in us, are the delightfull objects of this love. *Psa.* 119. 47, 127. 159. *Psa.* 5. 11, *and* 69. 36. *and* 119. 132. *and* 101. 6. For it imbraceth with delight, and complacency, but as it discerneth the image of God, and of Christ in the Soul, his presence in the ministery; and a suitableness in our worship to the word, and mind of Christ. *Psa.* 26. 8. *and* 27.

27. 4. *and* 84. 1 4. 1 *Thes.* 5. 13. *Phil.* 1. 3 7. *Eph.* 4. 32.

Love also hath a blessed faculty, and heavenly; in bearing and suffering afflictions, putting up wrongs, overlooking the infirmities of the brethren, and in serving in all Christian offices the necessities of the Saints *Charity suffereth long, and is kind, charity envyeth not, charity vaunteth not it self, is not puffed up, doth not behave it self unseemly; seeketh not her own; is not easily provoked; thinketh no evil, rejoyceth not in iniquity, but rejoyceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things; hopeth all things, endureth all things; charity never faileth.* 1 Cor 13. 1 Pet. 4. 8 Gal. 5. 13. In a word it designeth a holy conversation in this world; that God, and Christ, and the word of *may be glorified thereby.* 2 Cor. 11. 10, 11, 12 1 Pet. 1. 12. chap. 3. 16.

Of

Of the Scriptures.

TOuching which word of God, I thus believe and confess. 1. That all the holy scriptures are the words of God. *All scripture is given by inspiration of God. For the prophecy of the scripture came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God, speak as they were moved by the holy Ghost.* 2 Tim. 3 16. 2 Pet. 1. 21.

2 I believe that the holy scriptures, of themselves, without the addition of humane inventions, are able to make the man of God perfect in all things; and *throughly to furnish him unto all good works.* They are able *to make thee wise unto salvation through faith in Jesus Christ*; and to thee in all other things, that either respect the worship of God, or thy walking before all men. 2 Tim. 3. 14. 17,

17. 2 Pet. 1. 19,20,21.

3. I believe, the great end why God committed the Scriptures to writing was; that we might be instructed to Christ, taught how to believe, encouraged to patience, and hope, for the grace that is to be brought unto us, at the revelation of Jesus Christ; also, that we might understand what is sin, and how to avoid the commission thereof. *Joh.* 20. 31. 1 *Joh.* 5 13. *Rom.* 15. 4 *Concerning the works of men (* said David *) by the word of thy lips, I have kept me from the pathes of the destroyer.* Through thy precepts I get understanding, *therefore I hate every false way.* I have hid thy word in my heart, that I might not sin against thee. *Psa.* 17. 4. *and* 119. 104. *v.* 11.

4. I believe that they *cannot be broken*, but will certainly be fulfilled in all the prophecies, threatnings, and promises, either to the salvation, or dam-

damnation of men. They are like that flying roll, that will go over all the earth to cut off and curse; In them is contained also the blessing; they preach to us also the way of salvation; *Take heed therefore lest that come upon you which is written in the prophets, Behold ye despisers, and wonder and perish, For I work a work in your dayes, a work which you shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you.* Gal 3. 8. Acts 13. 40, 41. Joh. 10 35. chap. 12. 37. 41. chap. 3. 17, 18, 19. Zach. 5. 2. 3, 4.

5. I believe Jesus Christ, by the word of the scriptures, will judge all men at the day of doom; For that is the book of the Law of the Lord, according to *Pauls* Gospel, *Joh.* 12. 41, 49. *Rom* 2. 16.

6. I believe, *that this God made the world, and all things that are therein, for in Six dayes the Lord made Heaven and Earth, the Sea, and all that*

in

them in; also that after the time of the making thereof, he disposed of it to the children of men, with a preserve thereof for the children of God, that should in all ages be born thereunto. When the most high divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the Sons of Adam; he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel, for as he made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell upon the face of the earth, so he hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation. Acts 17, 24, Exo, 24, 19, Deu, 32, 8, Acts 17, 26.

Of Magistracy.

I believe, that Magistracy is God's ordinance, which he hath appointed for the government of the whole world; And that it is a judgment of God, to be without those ministers of God, which he hath ordained to put wick-

wickedness to shame. Judg 18.7.

Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist, shall receive to themselves damnation; For rulers are not a terror to good works but to the evil; Wilt thou not then be afraid of the power, do that which is Good and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evill, be afraid, for he beareth not the sword in vain, For he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doth evil: Wherefore, ye must needs be subject; not onely for wrath, but also for conscience sake: For this cause pay ye tribute also; for they are Gods ministers attending continually unto this very thing. Rom. 13. Many are the mercyes we receive, by a well qualified Magistrate, and if any shall at any time be otherwise inclined, *let us shew our christianity in a patient suffer-*

ing

ing for well doing, what it shall please God to inflict by them.

A reason of my Practise in Worship,

HAving thus made confession of my Faith, I now come to shew you my practise in Worship, with the reasons thereof. The which I shall have occasion to touch, under two distinct heads.

1. *With whom I dare not hold communion.*

2. *With whom I dare.*

Only, first, Note, that by the word Communion I mean fellowship *in the things of the Kingdom of Christ*, or that which is commonly called Church communion, the Communion of Saints. For in civil affairs and in things of this World that are honest, I am not altogether tyed up from the fornicators thereof, (*Cor.* 5 9, 10.) Wherefore in my following discourse understand me in the first sense.

Now,

Now, Then, *I dare not have communion with them that profess not faith and holiness*; or that are not visible Saints by calling: but note that by this assertion, I meddle not with the elect; but as he is a visible Saint by calling; neither do I exclude the secret Hypocrite, *if he be hid from me by visible Saint ship.* Wherefore I dare not have communion with men from a single supposition, that they may be elect, neither dare I exclude the other from a single supposing that he may be a secret Hypocrite. I meddle not here with these things, I onely exclude him that is not a visible Saint: Now he that is visibly or openly prophane, cannot be then a visible Saint, ; for he that is a visible Saint must profess faith, and repentance, and consequently holyness of life: And with none else dare I communicate.

First, Because God himself hath so strictly put the difference; both by

word and deed, For from the beginning, he did not only put a difference between the Seed of the woman and the children of the wicked, onely the instinct of grace and change of the mind as his own, but did cast out from his presence the father of all the ungodly, even cursed *Cain* when he shewed himself open prophane, and banished him to go into the Land of the Runnagate or Vagabond, where from Gods face, and so the priviledges of the communion of Saints he was ever after bid. *Gen.* 3. 15. *chap.* 4 9,10. 14,15,16.

Besides, when after this, through the policy of Satan, the children of *Cain*, and the seed of *Seth*, did commix themselves in worship, and by that means had corrupted the way of God: what followed, but first, God judged it wickedness, raised up *Noah* to preach against it, and after that, because they would not be reclaimed, he brought the flood, upon the whole

world of these ungodly; and saved onely *Noah* alive because he had kept himself righteous. *Gen.* 6. 1, 2 *v.* 3. 11, 12, 13.

Here I could inlarge abundantly, and add many more instances of alike nature, but I am here onely for a truth upon things.

Secondly, Because it is so often commanded in the Scriptures, That all the congregation should be holy. *I am the Lord your God, ye shall therefore sanctifie your selves; and ye shall be holy for I am holy. Ye shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy. Sanctifie your selves therefore and be ye holy, for I am the Lord your God.* Besides, 1. The Gates of the temple were to be shut against all other. *Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation, that keepeth the truth may enter in: This Gate of the Lord into which the righteous shall enter. Thus saith the Lord, no stranger uncircumcised in heart, or uncircum-*

cised in flesh shall enter into my Sanctuary of any stranger which is amongst the children of Israel. 2. Because, the things of worship are holy; *Be ye holy that bear the vessels of the Lord.* 3. Because all the limits, and bounds of communion are holy. *This is the law of the house, upon the top of the mountain, the whole limit thereof shall be most holy: Behold this is the Law of the house.* Lev. 11. 44. chap. 19. 2. chap. 20. 7. 1 Pet. 1. 15,16. Esa. 26. 2. Psa. 128. 20. Eze. 43. 12. chap. 44. 9. Esa. 52. 11.

Thirdly, I dare not have communion with them; Because the example of new testament churches before us, have been a community of visible Saints. Paul to the Romanes, writes thus: *To all that are at Rome, beloved of God, called to be Saints,* And to the rest of the Churches thus: *Unto the Church of God which is at Corinth; to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be Saints.*

To

To the Saints that are at *Ephesus*, and to the faithfull in Christ Jesus; To all the Saints that are at *Philippi* with the Bishops and Deacons. To the Saints and faithfull brethren which are at *Colosse*. To the Church of the *Thessalonians*, which is in God the Father, and in our Lord Jesus Christ; *&c.* Thus you see under what denomination, those persons went of old, who were counted worthy to be members of a visible Church of Christ. *Rom.* 1. 7. 1 *Cor.* 1. 2. *Eph.* 1. 1. *Col.* 1. 2. *Phil* 1. 1. 1 *Thes.* 1. 1. Besides, the members of such Churches, go under such characters as these.

1. *The called of Christ Jesus.* Rom. 1. 6.

2. Men that have drank into the spirit of Jesus Christ. 1 *Cor.* 12. 13.

3. Persons in whom was God the Father. *Eph.* 4 6.

4. They were all made partakers of the joy of the Gospell *Phil.* 1. 7.

5. Persons that were circumcised inwardly. *Col.* 2. 11.

6. Persons that turned to God from Idols, to serve the living and true God. 1 *Thes.* 1. 4.

7. Those that were the body of Christ, and members in particulars that is those that were visibly such; because they made profession of faith, of holyness, of repentance, of love to Christ, and of self-denyal, at their receiving into fellowship.

Fourthly, I dare not hold communion with the open prophane:

1. Because it is promised to the Church, that she shall dwell by her self; that is, as she is a Church, and spiritual; *Lo the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations.* Num. 23. 9.

2. Because this is their priviledge. *But ye are a chosen generation, a royall priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him, who hath called you out*

of

of darkness into his marvellous light. 1 Pet. 1. 9, 10,

3. Because this is the fruit of the death of Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity; and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works. *Tit.* 3. 14,

4. Because this is the Commandment: *Save your selves from this untoward generation.* Act. 2, 40,

5. Because with such it is not possible we should have true and spiritual communion. *Be not unequally joked together with unbelievers: For what fellowship hath righteousness, with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath he that believeth with an infidell? Or what agreement hath the temple of God with Idols? For ye are the temple of the living God, as God hath said, I will dwell in them and walk in them, and I will be their*

God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore, Come out from among them, and be ye separate saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and I will be a Father unto you saith the Lord Almighty. 2 Cor. 6, 14——18.

Fifthly, I dare not hold communion with the open prophane.

1. Because this would be plowing with on Ox, and an Ass together: heavenly things suit best for communion in heavenly matters. *Deut*, 22. 10.

2. It subjecteth not the nature of our discipline, which is not forced, but free, in a professed subjection to the will and commandment of Christ: others being excluded by God's own prohibition. *Levit.* 1. 3. *Rom.* 6. 17, 2 *Cor.* 8, 12. *chap.* 9 7. 13. *chap.* 8. 5.

Paul also when he exhorteth *Timothy* to follow after righteousness; Faith, Charity, Peace, *&c.* (which are

are the bowels of Church communion) he saith, *do it with those that call on the name of the Lord, out of a pure heart.* 2 Tim. 2, 22.

Sithly, In a word, to hold communion with the open prophane, is most pernicious and destructive.

1, 'Twas the wicked multitude, that fell a lusting, and that tempted Christ in the desert, *Num.* 11. 4.

2, It was the prophane, heathen, of whom Israel learned, to worship Idols. *They were mingled among the heathen, and learned their works, and served their Idols, which were a snare to them.* Psa. 106. 25, 26, 27,

3, It is the mingled people that God hath threatned to plague with those deadly punishments of his, with which he hath threatned to punish *Babylon* it self: saying, When a sword is upon her Glyars, her mighty, her chariots and treasures, a sword also shall be upon the mingled people that are in the middest of her.

And no marvail: for,

1. Mixed communion polluteth the ordinances of God. Say to the rebells saith the Lord God. *Let it suffice you, of all your abominations, that you have brought into my sanctuary strangers, uncircumcised in heart, and uncircumcised in flesh; to be in my sanctuary to pollute it; even my house, when ye offered my bread and the fat, and the blood: And they have broken my Covenant, because of all their abominations.* Eze. 44. 6, 7, 8.

2. *It violateth the law; her priests have violated my Law, and prophaned my holy things. (how) they have put no difference, between the holy and prophane; neither have they shewed difference between the unclean, and the clean.* Eze. 22. 6.

3. It prophaneth the holyness of God: *Judah hath dealt treacherously, and an abomination is committed in Israel, and Jerusalem: For Judah hath*

hath prophaned the holyneſs of th Lord which he loved, and hath married the daughter of a ſtrange God. Mal. 2, 11.

4. It defileth the truly Gracious; *Know ye not that a little Leaven, leaveneth the whole lump: Look diligently therefore leſt any root of bitterneſs ſpringing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled.* 1 Cor. 5, 6, Heb. 12, 15, 16.

Laſtly, To conclude, as I ſaid before, it provoketh God to puniſh with ſevere judgments; And therefore heed well.

1. As I ſaid before, The drowning of the whole world was occaſioned, by the ſons of God commixing themſelves with the daughters of men; and the corruption of worſhip that followed thereupon, *Gen.* 6, *and* 7 *chapters.*

2. He ſent a plague upon the children of Iſrael, for joyning themſelves unto the people of Moab; and for

follow

following their abominations in worship: And let no man think, that now I have altered the state of the question: for it is all one with the Church to Communicate with the prophane, and to sacrifice, and offer their gifts to the Divel: the reason is, because such have by their sin forsaken the protection of heaven, and are given up to their own heart-lusts; and left to be overcome of the wicked to whom they have joyned their selves. *Num*, 25, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. *Jos*, 22, 17, *Deut*, 32, 16 19, *Psa*. 106, 36. 40, *Deut*, 12, *Deut*, 7, 1, 2 6, *Neh*, 13, 26.

Joyn not your selves, saith God, to the wicked, neither in religion nor marriages; *for they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other Gods; so will the anger of the Lord be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddainly. Did not* Solomon *King of* Israel *sin by these things? ye among many nations was there*

there no King like him who was beloved of his God,

Hear how Paul handleth the point; *This I say, saith he, That the things which the Gentiles* or openly prophane *sacrifice; they sacrifice to Devils, and not to God: And I would not that you should have fellowship with Divels. Ye cannot drink of the Cup of the Lord, and the cup of Divels: Ye cannot be partakers of the table of the Lord, & of the table of Divels, Do we provoke the Lord to jealousie? Are we stronger then he?* 1 Cor. 10. 21, 22, 23. I conclude that therefore it is an evil, & a dangerous thing to hold Church-communion with the open prophane, and ungodly. It polluteth his ordinances: It violateth his Law: It prophaneth his holyness: It defileth his people, and provoketh the Lord to severe, and terrible judgments.

Object. But we can prove in all ages, there have been the open prophane

Phane in the Church of God.

Answ. In many ages indeed it hath been so; but marke, they appeared not such, when first they were received unto Communion neither was they with Gods liking, as such to be retained among them, but in order to their admonition repentance and amendment of life: of which if they failed; God presently threatned the Church; and either cut them off from the Church, as he did the Idolaters, Fornicators, murmurers, Tempters, Sabbath-breakers; with *Korah*, *Dathan*, *Achan* and others: or else cut of them with the Church and all, as he served the ten tribes at one time, and the two tribes at another. *My God shall cast them away, because they did not hearken to him, and they shall be wanderers among the nations.* Exod, 1., 48. 2 Cor. 6, 1 Cor. 5. 4,5; 10. 12, 13. Exo. 32 25. Numb, 25. 1 9. chap. 21. 5,6 chap. 14. 37. chap. 16.

16. chap. 15 32 30. Josh 7 2Kin. 17. Ezek 22. chap 23. Hos 9. 17. Neh 13.1,2,3, I might here greatly enlarge but I only intend brevity; yet let me tell you, that when *Nehemiah* understood by the book of the Law of the Lord, that the *Ammonite*, and the *Moabite* should not come into the congregation of God; *they separated from* Israel *all the mixed multitude.* Many have pleaded for the prophane, that they should abide in the Church of God; but such have not considered, that Gods wrath at all times hath with great indignation hath been shewed against such offenders and their conceits. Indeed they like not for to plead for them under that notion, but rather as *Korah*, and his company. *All the congregation is holy every one of them* Num. 16 3. But it maketh no matter by what name they are called, if by their deeds they shew themselves openly wicked: For names, and notions,

tions, sanctify not the heart, and nature: they make not vertues of vice, neither can it save such advocates, *from the heavy curse both of God and Men. The righteous men they shall judge them after the manner of adulteresses; and after the manner of women that shed blood, because they are adulteresses, and blood is in their hands.* Pro. 17. 15. chap. 24 24. Eze. 23.45.

Thus have I shewed you with whom I dare not have communion: And now to shew you with whom I dare. But in order thereto, I desire you first to take notice; That touching shaddowish, or figurative ordinances; I believe that Christ hath ordained but two in his Church, *viz.* Water baptism and the Supper of the Lord: both which are of excellent use to the Church, in this world; they being to us representations of the death, and resurrection of Christ, and are as God shall make them, helps

helps to our faith therein; But I count them not the fundamentals of our Christianity; nor grounds or rule to communion with Saints: servants they are, and our mystical Ministers, to teach and instruct us, in the most weighty matters of the Kingdom of God: I therefore here declare my reverent esteem of them; yet dare not remove them, as some do, from the place, and end, where by God they are set and appointed, nor ascribe unto them more, then they were ordered to have in their first, and primitive institution: Tis possible to commit Idolatry, even with Gods own appointments: But I pass this, and come to the thing propounded.

Secondly, then, *I dare have communion; Church communion with those that are visible Saints by calling*; with those that by the word of the Gospell, have been brought over to faith and holyness. And it maketh no matter to me, what their life was here-

heretofore, *if they now be washed, if they be sanctified. if they be justified in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the Spirit of our God.* 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10, 11.. Now in order to the discovery of this faith and holyness, and so to fellowship in Church-communion: I hold it requisite that a faithful relation be made thereof by the party thus to be received; yea if need be by witnesses also, *for the satisfaction of the church, that she may receive in faith and judgment*, such as best shall suit her holy profession. Acts 9. 26, 27, 28. 1 Cor. 16. 10. 2 Cor. 8. 23. Observe it; these Texts do respect extraordinary officers; and yet see, that in order to their reception by the Church, there was made to them a faithful relation, of the faith and holyness of these very persons; For no man may intrude himself upon, or thrust himself upon, or thrust himself into a Church of Christ: without the

Church

Church have first the knowledge and liking of the person to be received; if otherwise there is a door opened for all the hereticks in the world; yea for Divels also if they appear in humane shapes. But *Paul* shews you the manner of receiving, by pleading (after some disgrace thrown upon him by the false Apostles) for his own admission of his companions: *Receive us*, saith he, *we have wronged no man; we have defrauded no man; we have corrupted no man*: and so concerning Timothy; *If* Timothy *come*, saith he, *see that he may be with you without fear; for he worketh the work of the Lord, as I also do.* 2 Cor. 7. 2. 1 Cor 16 10. Also when Paul supposed that *Titus* might be suspected by some; see how he pleades for him: *If any do enquire of* Titus; *he is my partner, and fellow helper, concerning you; or our brethren be enquired of, they are the messengers of the Churches, and the glory*

of

...hrist. 2 Cor. 8. 23. *Phœbe* also ...hen she was to be received by the Church at *Rome*; see how he speaketh in her behalf: *I commend unto you Phœbe our sister, which is a servant of the Church, which is at* Cenchrea; *that ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh Saints; and that you assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you; for she hath been a succourer of many, and of my self also.* Rom. 16. 1, 2. Yea when the Apostles, and brethren sent their Epistles, from Jerusalem to *Antioch*: under what characters do those go, that were the messengers to them? *It seemed good, unto the holy Ghost, and to us, to send chosen men unto you, with our beloved* Barnabas, *and* Saul, *men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ*, &c. Acts 15. 25, 26. 27. Now though the

Saul was in Antioch before, but being brought into suspicion by false Apostles, he had need of a new commendation.

the occasion upon which these commendations were written, were not simply, or onely, in order to Church relation, but also for other causes; yet because the persons concerned were of the Churches to be received as faithfull, and such who would partake of Church priviledges with them, they have therefore, their faith, and faithfulness relate to the Churches, as those that were particularly imbodyed there. Besides *Timothy* and *Titus* being extrordinary officers, stood as members and officers in every Church where they were received: Likewise *Barnabas*, and *Saul*, *Judas*, and *Silas*, abode as members, and officers there where they were sent. 'Twas requisite therefore that the Letters of recommendation, should be in substance the same with that relation, that ought to be made to the Church, by or for the person, that is to be imbodyed there. But to return; *I dare have communion, Church-*

communion with those that are visible Saints by calling.

Quest. *But by what rule would you receive him into fellowship with yourselves.*

Answ. Even by a discovery of their faith and holyness; *and their declaration of willingness to subject themselves to the laws and government of Christ in his Church.*

Quest. But do you not count that by *water-baptism*, and not otherwise that being the initiating, and entering ordinance, they ought to be received into fellowship.

Answ. No; But tarry, and take my sense with my word. For herein lyes the mistake, To think that because in time past, Baptism was administred upon conversion, *that therefore it is the initiating, and entring ordinance* into Church-communion: when by the word no such thing is testifyed of it. Besides, that it is not so, will be manifest, if we consider the nature

ture; and power of such an ordinance.

That ordinance then, that is the initiating or entering ordinance before, Doth give to them that partake thereof, a right to, and a being of membership, with that particular Church, by which it is administred. I say, a right to, and a being of membership, without the addition of another Church-Act. This is evident by the Law of circumcision, which was the initiating Law of old; For by the administration of that very ordinance, the partaker thereof was forthwith a member of that congregation, *without the addition of another Church-act.* Gen. 17. This is declared in its first institution, and therefore it is called the token of the Covenant. The token or sign of righteousnes of *Abrahams* Faith, and of the visible membership of those that joyned themselves to the Church with him; the very inlet into Church-communion, that gave a being

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ing of membership among them And thus *Moses* himself expounds it; *Every Man-servant* saith he, *that is bought with money when thou hast circumcised him, he shall eat of the passover*: without the addition of another Church act, to impower him thereunto; his circumcision hath already given him a being there, and so a right to, and priviledge in the blessing of Church-relation: *A Forreigner and an hired servant shall not eat thereof.* (because not circumcised) *but when a stranger that sojourneth with thee, will keep the Passover to the Lord, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it.* (for then he is one of the Church) *and he shall be as one born in the Land; for no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof.* Exo. 12. 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49. Neither could any other thing, according to the Law of Circumcision, give the devoutest person alive breathed, a being of membership with them.

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He that is born in thine house, & he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised, & the uncircumcised man-child, whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that Soul shall be cut off from his people. Gen. 17. 13, 14. Note then, that that which is the initiating ordinance, admitteth none into Church-communion, but those that first partake thereof; The Angel sought to kill *Moses* himself, for attempting to make his child a member without it. Note again, that as it admitteth of none to membership without it, so as I said, *the very act of circumcising them, without the addition of another Church act*, gave them a being of membership with that very Church, by whom they were circumcised. *Exo.* 4. 24, 25, 26. But none of this can be said of Baptism. First there is none debarred or threatned to be cutoff from the Church if they be not first baptized; Secondly, neither doth it give to the person bapti-

zed, a being of membership, with this or that Church, by whose members he hath been baptized. *John* gathered no particular Church, yet was he the first, and great baptizer with water; he preached Christ to come, and baptized with the baptism of repentance, and left his Disciples to be gathered by him. Acts 19. 3, 4, 5. *And to him shall the gathering of the people be* Gen. 49. 10. Besides after Christs ascension, *Philip* baptized the *Eunuch*, but made him, by that, no member of any particular Church: We onely read, that *Philip* was caught away from him, and that the *Eunuch* saw him no more, but went on his way rejoycing to his Masters and countrey of *Ethiopia*. *Acts* 8. 35. 40. Neither was *Cornelius* made a member of the Church at *Jerusalem*, by his being baptized at *Peters* commandment at *Cæsarea*. *Acts* 10. *chap.* 11. Neither were they that were converted

at *Antioch*, by them that were scattered from the Church at *Jerusalem*, by their baptism (if they were baptized at all) joyned to the Church at *Jerusalem*, Acts 11. 19. No, they were after gathered, and imbodyed among themselves, by other Church acts. *Acts* 16. What shall I say? Into what particular Church was *Lydia* baptized by *Paul*, or those first converts at *Philippi*? Yea even in the second of the Acts, Baptizing and adding to the Church, appear to be acts distinct: but if Baptism were the initiating ordinance, then was he that we Baptized made a member; made a member of a particular Church, by the very Act of water baptism: Neither ought any by Gods ordinance to have Baptized any, but with respect to the admitting them by that Act, to a being of membership in this particular Church. For if it be the initiating ordinance, it entereth them into the Church: What Church?

Into a visible Church; Now there is no Church visible but that which is particular; The Universal being utterly invisible, and known to none but God. The person then that is baptized stands by that, a member of no Church at all, neither of the visible, nor yet of the invisible. A visible Saint he is, but not made so by Baptism; for he must be a visible Saint before, else he ought not to be baptized *Acts* 8. 37. *Acts* 9. 17. *Acts* 16. 33.

Take it again; *Baptism makes thee no member of the Church, neither particular nor universall: neither doth it make thee a visible Saint: It therefore gives thee neither right to, nor being of membership at all,*

Quest. But why then were they Baptized.

Answ. That their own Faith by that figure might be strengthened in the death and resurrection of Christ. And that themselves might see, that

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they have professed themselves, dead, and buryed, and risen with him to newnes of life, did not seal to the Church that they were so (their satisfaction as to that arose from better arguments) but taught the party himself, that he ought so to be. Farther, It confirmed to his own conscience the forgivenes of sins, if by unfeigned faith he laid hold upon Jesus Christ. *Col.* 2 12. *Rom.* 6. 3, 4. *Gal.* 3. 26. 1 *Cor.* 15. 29. *Acts* 2. 38. *Acts* 22. 16. 1 *Pet.* 3. 21.

Now then, if Baptism be not the initiating ordinance, we must seek for entring some other way, by some other appointment of Christ; unless we will say, that without rule, without order and without an appointment of Christ, we may enter into his visible Kingdom. The Church under the Law had their initiating and entering ordinance, it must therefore be, unless we should think that

Moses was more punctual and exact then Christ, but that also our Lord hath his entering appointment. Now that which by Christ is made the door of enterance into the Church, by that we may doubtless enter; and seeing Baptism is not that ordinance, we ought not to seek to enter thereby, but may with good conscience enter without it.

Quest. But by what rule, then would you gather persons into Church-communion?

Answ. *Even by that rule, by which they are discovered to the Church to be visible Saints; and willing to be gathered into their body and fellowship.* By that word of God therefore, by which their Faith, experience, and conversation (being examined) is found Good; by that the Church should receive them into fellowship with them. Marke; Not as they practise things that are circumstantial, but as their faith is commended by a word

word of faith, and their converſation by a moral precept. Wherefore that is obſervable, that after *Paul* had declared himſelf ſound of faith; he falls down to the body of the Law: *Receive us, ſaith he, we have wronged no man, we have corrupted no man, we have defrauded no man*; he ſaith not, I am baptized; but I have wronged no man, *&c.* 2 *Cor.* 5. 18, 19, 20, 21. *chap.* 7. 2. And if Churches after the confeſſion of faith, made more uſe of the ten commandments, to judge of the fitneſs of perſons by; they might not exceed by this ſeeming ſtrictneſs chriſtian tenderneſs towards them, they receive to communion.

I will ſay therefore, that by the word of faith and of good works: moral duties Goſpellized; we ought to judge of the fitneſs of members by, by which we ought alſo to receive them to fellowſhip: *For he that in theſe things proveth ſound*

hath the antitype of circumsion, which was before the entering ordinance. *For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumsion which is outward in the flesh. But he is a Jew which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart in the spirit, whose praise is not of men but of God.* Rom. 2. 28, 29. Phil. 3. 1. 2 3, 4.

Now a confession of this by word and life, makes this inward circumsion visible; When you know him therefore to be thus circumcised, you ought to admit him to the Lords passover: he, if any hath a share, not onely in Church communion, but a visible right to the Kingdom of Heaven.

Again, *For the Kingdom of God*, or our Service to Christ, *consisteth not in meats or drinks, but in righteousness, peace, and joy in the holy Ghost; And he that in these things serveth Christ, is accepted of God, and approved of men.* Rom. 14 18. Deut. 23. 47. By which

word

word righteousness he meaneth as *James* doth; the royal Law, the perfect Law, which is the moral precept Evangelized or delivered to us by the hand of Christ. *James* 2. 8 9. The Law was given twice on *Sinai*; The last time it was given with a proclamation of grace and mercy of God, and of the pardon of sins going before. *Exo.* 19. *and chap.* 34. 1. 10 The second giving is here intended; for so it cometh after faith, which first receiveth the proclamation of forgiveness; hence we are said to do this righteousness in the joy and peace of the holy Ghost. Now he that in these things serveth Christ, is accepted of God, and approved of men. For who is he that can justly find fault with him that fullfilleth the royal Law from a principle of Faith and Love. *If ye fullfill the royal Law according to the Scriptures, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self; ye do well*; ye are approved of men. Again, he

that hath loved another hath fulfilled the Law, for love is the fulfilling of the Law. He then that serveth Christ, according to the royal Law, from faith and love going before, he is a fit person for Church-communion; God accepteth him, Men approve him. Now that the royal Law, is the moral precept; read the place. *James* 2. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. It is also called the law of liberty, because the bondage is taken away by forgiveness going before; and this is it by which we are judged, as is said, meet or unmeet for Church-communion, *&c.*

Therefore I say, the rule by which we receive Church-members, it is the word of the Faith of Christ, and of the moral precept Evangelized, as I said before, *I am under the Law to Christ*, saith Paul. So when he forbideth us, communion with men, they be such as are destitute of the Faith of Christ, and live in the transgression

greſſion of a moral precept: [illegible] written unto you, ſaith he, not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother, be a fornicator, or covetous, or an Idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner, with ſuch an one no not to eat. He ſaith not, if any man be not Baptized, have not hands laid on him, or joyne with the unbaptized: theſe are fictions, ſcriptureleſs notions. For this, *Thou ſhalt not commit Adultery; Thou ſhalt not Kill; Thou ſhalt not Steal; Thou ſhalt not bear falſe witneſs; Thou ſhalt not Covet. And if there be any other Commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this ſaying, Thou ſhalt Love thy Neighbour as thy ſelf. Love thinketh no ill to his Neighbour; therefore Love is the fullfilling of the Law.* Rom. 13. 9, 10.

The word of Faith, and the moral precept, is that which *Paul* injoyns the Galathians and Philippians; ſtill avoiding outward circumſtances: hence

hence therefore when he had to the Galathians treated of Faith, he falls point blank upon moral duties. *For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature: And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.* Gal. 6 15, 16. As many as walk, according to this rule, What rule? The rule by which men are proved new creatures: The word of Faith and the moral precept. Wherefore *Paul* exhorteth the Ephesians, not to walk as other Gentiles, in the vanity of their mind; seeing they had received Christ, and had heard him, and had been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus; that they would put off the old man; what is that? Why, the former conversation, which is corrupt according to the deceitfull lusts; Lying, Anger, Sin, giving place to the Divel, corrupt communication, all bitterness, wrath,

wrath, clamor, evil speaking, with all malice; and that they would put on the new man; What is that? That which is created in righteousnes and true holyness; A being renewed in the spirit of their mind, and a putting away all these things. *Eph.4. For in Christ Jesus*, these words are put in of purpose, to shew us the nature of new Testament administrations; And how they differ from the old: In *Moses* an outward conformity, to an outward and carnal ordinance, was sufficient to give (they subjecting themselves thereto) a being of membership with the Jews: But in Christ Jesus it is not so: of *Abrahams* flesh was the national Jewish congregation; but it is *Abrahams* Faith that makes new testament Churches; *They that are of Faith, are the children of faithfull Abraham. They that are of Faith, the same are the children of Abraham.* So then the seed being now spiritual, the rule must needs be spiritual also

viz. the word of Faith and holyness: This is the Gospel concision knife; sharper then any two edged sword; and that by which new testament Saints are circumcised in heart, ears, and lips. *For in Christ Jesus*, no outward and circumstantial thing; but the new creature; none subjects of the visible Kingdom of Christ but visible Saints by calling; Now that which manifesteth a person to be a visible Saint, must be conformity to the word of Faith and Holyness. *And they that are Christs, have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.* Hearken how delightfully *Paul* handleth the point? The new creatures, are the Israel of God. The new creature hath a rule by himself to walk by; And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God. *Paul* to the Philippians commandeth as much; where treating of his own practice in the doctrine of

Faith

Faith and Holyneſs, requireth them to walk by the ſame rule, to mind the ſame thing. I deſire to be found in Chriſt; ſaith he, I reach forward toward the things that are before; my converſation is in heaven, and flatly oppoſite to them, whoſe God is their belly, who glory in their ſhame, and who mind earthly things. *Brethren*, ſaith he, *be ye followers together with me; and mark them that walk ſo*; Mark them; For what? For perſons that are to be received into fellowſhip and the choyceſt communion of Saints. And indeed this is the ſafeſt way to judge of the meetneſs of perſons by. For take away the confeſſion of Faith and holyneſs; and what can diſtinguiſh a Chriſtian from a Turk? He that indeed receiveth faith, and that ſquareth his life by the royal, perfect, moral precept; and that walketh there, in the joy and peace of the holy Ghoſt; no man can reject him; he cannot be a man if he object a-

gainſt

against him; not a man in Christ; not a man in understanding. *The Law is not made for a righteous man*; neither her to debar him the communion of Saints if he desire it, nor to cast him out if he were in. *But for the Lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and prophane: For murtherers of fathers and for murtherers of mothers; for manslayers, for whoremongers: for them that defile themselves with mankind; for manstealers, for prejured persons; and if there be any other thing contrary to sound doctrine, according to the glorious Gospell which is committtd to my trust.* 1 Tim, 1.9, 10, 11. *Paul also*, wen he would leave an everlasting conviction upon the Ephesians concerning his Faith and Holyness; treating first of the sufficiency of Christs blood, and the grace of God to save us; he adds, *I have coveted no mans Silver, or Gold, or Apparell*, he bringth them to the moral precept,

to

o prove the sincerity of his good conversation by. *Acts* 20. 28. 32, 33. And when men have juggled what they can, and made never such a prattle about religion, yet if their greatest excellency, as to the visibility of their Saintship, lyeth in an outward conformity, to an outward circumstance in religion; their profession is not worth two mites. *Let us walk honestly, as in the day, not in rioting, and drunkenss; not in chambering and wantonness; not in strife and envy; but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof.* Rom. 13. 13, 14. And it is observable, That after the Apostle had in the 9th and 10th verses of this chapter told us, that the moral precept is the rule of a good conversation; and exhorted us to make no provision for the flesh; he adds (these things provided) we may receive any that believe in Christ Jesus, unto communion with us,

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how weak soever and dark in circumstantialls; and chiefly designs the proof thereof, in the remaining part of his Epistle. For he that is of sound Faith, and of conversation honest in the world; no man, however he may fail in circumstances, may lightly reproach or vilify him. And indeed such persons are honour of Christian congregations. Indeed he is prejudiced, for want of light in those things about which he is dark; as of Baptism or the like; but seeing that is not the initiating ordinance, or the visible character of a Saint; yea seeing it maketh no breach in a good and holy life; nor intrencheth upon any mans right but his own; and seeing his Faith may be effectual without it, and his life approved by the worst of his enemies; why should his friends, while he keeps the Law, dishonour God by breaking of the same? *Speak not evil one of another brethren; he that speaketh evil of his*

brother

brother, and judgeth his brother; speak evil of the Law and judgeth the Law: But if thou judge the Law thou art not a doer of the Law, but a judge. Jam. 4. 11. He that is judged, must needs fail somewhere in the apprehension of him that judgeth him, else why is he judged, But he must not fail in substance, for then he is worthy to be judged. 1 *Cor.* 5. 12. his failure is then in a circumstance, *for which he ought not to be judged.*

Object. But notwithstanding all that you have said: Water baptism ought to go before Church-membership; shew me one in all the New Testament, that was received into fellowship without it.

Answ. 1. That Water-baptism hath formerly gone first is granted: But that it ought of necessity so to do, I never saw proof.

2. None ever received it without light going before, unless they did play

play the Hypocrite: And besides no marvail though in the primitive times it was so generally practised first, for the unconverted themselves know, it belonged to the Disciples of Jesus Christ. *Joh* 1.24,25,26,27. Yet that all that were received into fellowship, were even then baptized first, would strain a weak mans wit to prove it, if arguments were closely made upon these three texts of holy scriptures (1 *Cor.* 1.14,15,16 *Gal.* 3.27. *Rom* 6.3.) But I pass them, and say, If you can shew me the Christian, that in the primitive times remained dark about it, I will shew you the Christian that was received without it.

But should I grant more then can be proved; *viz.* That Baptism were the initiating ordinance; and that it once did, as circumcision of old, give a being of membership to the partakers; yea set the case that men were forbidden then to enter into fellowship without it: yet the case may so bee,

that

that these things notwithstanding men might be received into fellowship without it. All these things intailed to circumcision; That was the initiating ordinance; that gave being of membership; that was it without which it was positively commanded, none should be received into fellowship, *Jos.* 5. Yet for all this more then six hundred thousand were received into the Church without it; yea received, and also retained there: and that by *Moses* and *Joshua*, even those to whom the Land was promised, when the uncircumcised were cut off. But why then were they not circumcised? Doubtless there was a reason; either they wanted time, or opportunity, or instruments, or something. But they could not render a bigger reason then this. *I have no light therein*; which is the cause at this day that many a faithful man denyeth to take up the ordinance of Baptism, But I say

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what ever the hinderance was, it matteredh not; our brethren have a maniſeſt one, an invincible one, one that all the men on earth nor Angels in heaven cannot remove; *For it is God that createth light*; and for them to do it without light would but prove them unfaithfull to themſelves, and make them ſinners againſt God; *For whatſoever is not of Faith is ſin.* Rom. 14. If therefore *Moſes* and *Joſhuah* thought fit to communicate with ſix hundred thouſand uncircumciſed perſons; when by the Law not one ſuch ought to have been received among them; why may not I have communion, the cloſeſt communion with viſible Saints as afore deſcribed, although they want light in, and ſo cannot ſubmit to that, which of God was never made the wall of diviſion betwixt us. I ſhall therefore hold communion with ſuch.

Firſt. Becauſe the true viſible Saint hath already ſubjected to that which

which is better; even to the righteousness of God, which is by Faith of Jesus Christ; by which he stands just before God; he also hath made the most exact and strict rule under heaven, that whereby he squares his life before men. He hath like precious Faith with the best of Saints, and a conversation according to light received, becoming the Gospell of Christ: He is therefore to be received, received I say, not by thy light, not for that in circumstances he jumpeth with thy opinion; but according to his own Faith which he ought to keep himself before God. *Conscience I say, not thine own, but of the other; For why is my liberty judged by another mans conscience.* 1 Cor. 10. 29. Some indeed do object that what the Apostles wrote, they wrote to gathered Churches, and so to such as were baptized. And therefore the arguments that are in the Epistles about things circumstantial,

tial, respect not the case in hand. But I will tell such, that as to the first part of their objection, they are utterly under a mistake. The first to the *Corinthians*, The Epistle of *James*, both them of *Peter*, and the first Epistle of *John*, were expresly written to all the Godly, as well as particular Churches. Again; if Water-baptism, as the circumstances with which the Churches were pesterred of old, trouble their peace, wound the consciences of the Godly, dismember and break their fellowships, it is although an ordinance for the present to be prudently shunned; for the edification of the Church as I shall shew anon, is to be preferred before it.

Secondly, and observe it; *One Spirit, one Hope, one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism* (not of Water, for by one Spirit are we all Baptized into one body) one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all, and

to

in you all; is a sufficient rule for us to hold communion by, & also to endeavour the maintaining that communion, and to keep it in unity, within the bond of peace against all attempts whatsoever. *Eph.* 4. 1 6. 1 *Cor.* 12. 16.

Thirdly, I am bold therefore to have communion with such *Heb.* 6. 2. Because they also have the doctrin of Baptisms: I say the doctrins of them; For here you must note, I distinguish between the doctrin and practise of Water-baptism; The Doctrin being that which by the outward sign is presented to us; or which by the outward circumstance of the act is preached to the believer: *viz. The death of Christ; My death with Christ, also his resurrection from the Dead, and mine with him to newness of life.* This is the doctrin which Baptism preacheth, or that which by the outward action is signified to the believing receiver. Now I say, he that believeth in Jesus Christ, that

richer and better then that, viz. is dead to sin, and that lives to God by him, he hath the heart, power and doctrine of Baptisme: all then that he wanteth, is but the sign, the shadow, or the outward circumstance thereof, Not yet is that despised, but forborn for want of light. That hath of Baptisme he hath, he is Baptized by that one spirit, he hath the heart of Water baptisme, he wanteth only the outward shew, which if he had would not prove him a truly visible Saint, it would not tell me he had grace in his heart? It is no Sacramentall note to another, of my Sonship with God; Indeed it is a sign to the person Baptized, and an help to his own Faith, he should know by that circumstance, that he hath received remission of sins, if his Faith be as true, as his being Baptized is felt by him. But if for want of light, he partake not of that sign, his Faith can see it in other things,

exceeding

exceeding great and precious promises. Yea as I also have hinted already, if he appear not a Brother before, he appeareth not a Brother by that. And those that shall content themselves to make that the note of visible Church-membership; I doubt make things not much better, the note of their sonship with God.

Fourthly, I am bold to hold communion with visible Saints as afore; because God hath communion with them; whose example in the case, we are streightly commanded to spillow. *Receive you one another as Christ Jesus hath received you*, saith Paul, *to the glory of God.* Rom. 15. 1 6. Yea though they be Saints o opinions contrary to you; though it goeth against the mind of them that are strong. *We that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak; and not to please our selves.* What infirmityes? Those

The Strongest may sometimes be out of the way.

that are natural are incident to all, they are infirmityes then that are sinfull, that cause a man for want of light, to erre in circumstantials; And the reason upon which he ground this admonition is, *that Christ pleased not himself; but as it is written, the reproaches of them that reproached thee, have fallen upon me.* You say, to have communion with such weak brethren, reproacheth your opinions, and practise; Grant it, your dulness and deadness, and imperfections also reproach the holyness of God; If you say no; for Christ hath born our sins; The answer is still the same, Their sins also are fallen upon Christ; He then that hath taken away thy sins from before the throne of God; hath taken away their shortness in conformity to an outward circumstance in religion. *Both your infirmityes are fallen upon Christ*; yea if notwithstanding thy great sins; thou standest by Christ compleat before the Throne

of

of God, why may not thy Brother, notwithstanding his little ones, stand compleat before thee in the Church.

Vain man! Think not by the streightness of thine order, in outward and bodily conformity, to outward and shadowish circumstances, that thy peace is maintained with God, for peace with God is by Faith in the blood of his cross, who hath born the reproaches of you both. Wherefore he that hath communion with God for Christs sake, is as good and as worthy of the communion of Saints as thy self. He erreth in a circumstance, thou errest in a substance; who must bear these errors? Upon whom must these reproaches fall? *Phil.* 1. 10. Some of the things of God that are excellent have not been approved by some of the Saints: What then? Must these for this be cast out of the Church? No, these reproaches by which the wisedom of heaven is reproached

have fallen upon me, saith Christ. But to return; *God hath received him, Christ hath received him*, therefore do you receive him. There is more solidity in this argument, *then of all the Churches of God had received him.* This receiving then, because it is set an example to the Church is such as must needs be visible to them; and is best described by that word which discovereth the visible Saint: Whoso therefore you can by the word, judge a visible Saint, one that walketh with God; you may judge by the self same word that God hath received him. Now him that God receiveth and holdeth communion with, him you should receive and hold communion with. Will any say we cannot believe that God hath received any but such as are Baptized? I will not suppose a Brother so stupified; and therefore to that I will not answer.

Receive him to the Glory of God.

To

[To the Glory of God] put in on purpose, to shew what dishonour they bring to God who despise to have communion with them, who yet they know have communion with God. For how doth this man or that Church glorify God, or count the wisdom and holyness of heaven beyond them, when they refuse communion with them; *concerning whom, they are by the word convinced, that they have communion with God.*

Now the God of patience and consolation, grant you to be like minded one towards another, according to Christ Jesus. Rom. 15. 5. By this word Patience, Paul insinuateth how many imperfections, the choycest Christians, do mingle their best performances with. And by this of consolation, how readily God overlooks, passeth by them and comforteth you notwithstanding. Now that this mind should be in Christians one to another, is manifest; because

Paul praies that it might be so. But this is an heavenly gift, and therefore must be fetched from thence. But let the patience of God, and the willingness of Christ to bear the reproaches of the weak, and the consolations that they have in God, notwithstanding, moderate your passions and put you upon prayer to be minded like Jesus Christ.

Fifthly, Because a failure in such a circumstance as Water doth not unchristian us; This must needs be granted, not onely from what was said before; but for that thousands of thousands that could not consent thereto, as we have more gloriously, then we are like to do, acquitted themselves and their Christianity before men, and are now with the innumerable company of Angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect: What is said of Eating or the contrary may as to this be said of Water baptism. Neither if I be Baptized, am I the better, neither if I be not, am I

the

the worse: Not the better before God; not the worse before men; still meaning as Paul doth, provided I walk according to my light with God: otherwise 'tis false; For if a man that seeth it to be his duty, shall despisingly neglect it; or if he that hath no Faith therein shall foolishly take it up; both these are for this the worse, being convicted in themselves for transgressors. He therefore that doth it according to his light, doth well; and he that doth it not, or dare not do it for want of light doth not ill; for he approveth his heart to be sincere with God: he dare not do any thing but by light in the word. If therefore he be not by Grace a partaker of light, in that circumstance which thou professest; yet he is a partaker of that liberty and mercy by which thou standest. He hath liberty to call God Father, as thou: And to believe he shall be saved by Jesus: His Faith, as thine, hath pu-

rifyed his heart; He is tender of the Glory of God as thou art; and can claim by Grace an Interest in Heaven; which thou must not do because of Water; Ye are both then Christians before God and men without it: He that can let him preach to himself by that: He that cannot let him preach to himself by the promises; But yet let us rejoyce in God together; let us exalt his name together, Indeed the Baptized can thank God for that, for which another cannot; But may not he that is unbaptized thank god for that which the baptized cannot Wouldst thou be content that I should judge thee, because thou canst not for my light give thanks with me? Why then should he judge me for that I cannot give thanks with him for his? *Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block, or occasion of offence in his Brothers way.* Rom. 14. 13. And seeing the things wherein we exceed each other

other, are such as neither make nor marre Christianity; let us love one another and walk together by that glorious rule above specifyed, leaving each other in all such circumstances to our own Master, to our own Faith. *Who art thou that judgest another mans servant? To his own Master he standeth or falleth; yea he shall be holden up, for God is able to make him stand.* Rom. 14. 4.

Sixthly, I am therefore for holding communion thus, because the edification of Souls in the Faith and holyness of the Gospell, is of greater concernment, then an agreement in outward things; I say, 'tis of greater concernment with us, and of far more profit to our Brother; then our agreeing in, or contesting for the business of Water-baptism. *Joh.* 16. 13. 1 *Cor.* 14. 26. 2 *Cor.* 10 8. *chap.* 12. 19. *Eph.* 4. 12. 2 *Tim.* 2. 10, 17. 1 *Cor.* 8. 1. *chap.* 13. 1, 2. That the edification of Soul, is of the greatest concern

cern, is out of measure evident: because heaven and eternal happiness are so immediately concerned therein. Besides, this is that for which Christ dyed, for which the holy Ghost was given, yea for which the Scriptures and the gifts of all the Godly are given to the Church; yea and if gifts are not bent to this very work, the persons are said to be proud or uncharitable that have them; and stand but for cyphers or worse among the Churches of God. Farther, Edification is that that cherisheth all grace, and maketh the Christians quick and lively, and maketh sin lean and dwindling, and filleth the mouth with thanksgiving to God. But to contest with gracious men, with men that walk with God; to shut such out of the Churches; because they will not sin against their Souls, rendereth thee uncharitable. *Rom.* 14. 15. 20. *Thou seekest to destroy the work of God*, thou begetteſt

eſt contentions, janglings, murmurings, and evil ſurmiſings, thou miniſtreſt occaſion for whiſperings, backbitings, ſlanders and the like, rather then godly edifying, contrary to the whole current of the ſcriptures and peace of all communityes. Let us therefore leave off theſe contentions, and follow after things that make for peace, *and things wherewith one may edify another.* Rom. 14. 19. And know that the edification of the Church of God dependeth not upon, neither is tyed to this or that circumſtance. Eſpecially when there are in the hearts of the Godly, different perſwaſions about it: then it becometh them in the wiſedom of God, to take more care for their peace and unity, then to widen or make large their uncomfortable differences.

Although *Aaron* tranſgreſſed the Law, becauſe he eat not the ſin offering of the people; yet ſeeing he could

not

not do it with satisfaction to his own conscience; *Moses* was content that he left it undone. *Lev.* 10.16. 20.

Joshuah was so zealous against *Eldad* and *Medad*, for prophesying in the camp, without first going to the Lord to the door of the tabernacle, as they were commanded, that he desired *Moses* to forbid them; *Num.* 11.16: 26. but *Moses* calls his zeal, envy, and prays to God for more such Prophets; knowing that although they failed in a circumstance, they were right in that which was better. The edification of the people in the camp was that which pleased *Moses*.

In *Hezekiahs* time; Though the people came to the passover in an undue manner; *and did eat it otherwise then it was written*; yet the wise King would not forbid them, but rather admired it, knowing that their edification was of greater concern, then to hold them to circumstance

or two. 2 *Chro:* 30. 13 — 27. Yea God himself, did like the wisdom of the King, and healed, that is, forgave the people at the prayer of *Hezekias*. And observe it, notwithstanding this disorder, as to circumstances; the feast was kept with great gladness; and the Levites and the priests praised the Lord, day by day, singing with loud instruments unto the Lord: yea there was not the like joy in *Jerusalem*, from the the time of *Solomon* unto that same time. What shall we say, all things must give place to the profit of the people of God. Yea sometimes Laws themselves, for their outward preservation; much more for Godly edifying; When Christs disciples plucked the ears of corn on the Sabbath (no doubt for very hunger) and were rebuked by the Pharisees for it, as for that which was unlawfull; How did their Lord succour them? By excusing them, and rebuking their adversaries

saries. *Have ye not read, said he, what David did when he was an hungred, and they that were with him, how he entred into the house of God, and did eat the shew-bread, which was not lawfull for him to eat, neither for them that were with him, but for the Priests onely; or have ye not read in the Law, how that on the Sabbath-day, the Priests in the Temple prophaned the Sabbath and were blameless.* Why blameless? Because they did it in order to the edification of the people. *Mat.* 12, 1. 6. If Laws and ordinances of old, have been broken and the breach of them born with (when yet the observance of outward things was more strictly commanded then now) when the profit and edification of the people, came in competition, how much more may not we have communion, Church-communion, no Law whereis transgressed thereby.

Seventhly, Therefore I am for holding communion thus, because

Love

Love, which above all things we are commanded to put on, is of much more worth then to break about Baptism; *Love is also more discovered when it receiveth for the sake of Christ, and grace, then when it refuseth for want of Water*: And observe it, as I have also said before, this exhortation to Love is grounded upon the putting on of the new creature, which new creature hath swallowed up all distinctions, that have before been common among the Churches. As I am a Jew, you are a Greek, I am circumcised, you are not: I am free, you are bound. Because Christ was all in all these, *Put on therefore*, saith he, *(as the elect of God, holy and beloved) bowels of mercyes, kindness, humbleness of mind, long suffering*, that is, with reference to the infirmities of the weak, *forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, If any man have a quarrel against any, even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye: And above all things put on cha-*

rity

rity, which is the bond of perfectness. Col. 3. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14. Which forbearing and forgiving respecteth not onely private and personal injuries, but also errours in judgment about inclinations and destinctions tending to divisions, and separating upon the grounds laid down in v. 11th, which how little soever they now seem to us who are beyond them, were strong, and of weight to them who in that day were intangled with them. Some Saints then, were not free to preach to any but the Jews; denying the word of Life to the Gentiles, and contending with them who preferred it to them: which was a greater error then this of Baptism. *Act.* 11. 1, 2, 3: 19. But what should we do with such kind of Saints? Why love them still, forgive them, bear with them, and maintain Church-communion with them. Why? Because they are new creatures, because they are Christs; For these

these swallow up all distinctions. Farther, because they are elect and beloved of God. Divisions and distinctions are of shorter date then election, let mouthem therefore that are but momentary and hatcht in darkness, break that bond that is from everlasting. It is Love, not Baptism that discovereth us to the world to be Christs Disciples. It is Love that is the undoubted character of our interest in, and sonship with God: I mean when we Love as Saints, and desire communion with others, because they have fellowship one with another, in their fellowship with God the Father, and his Son Jesus Christ. 1 *Joh.* 1. 2. And now though the truth and sincerity of our Love to God, be then discovered when we keep his commandments, in Love to his name; yet we should remember again, that the two head and chief Commandments, are Faith in Jesus, and Love to the brethren: 1 *Joh* 3. 23.

23. So then he that pretendeth to Love, and yet seeks not the profit of his Brother in chief, he Loveth, but they are his own opinions and froward notions. *Jam.* 4. 11. *Rom.* 14. 21. *Love is the fulfilling of the Law*; but he fulfills it not who judgeth, and setteth at nought he his Brother, that stumbleth, offendeth and maketh weak his Brother, and all for the sake of a circumstance, that to which he cannot consent, except he sin against his own Soul, or Papist like, live by an implicite Faith. Love therefore is sometimes more seen and shewed, in forbearing to urge and press what we know, then in publishing and imposing. I could not saith *Paul*, (Love would not let me) *speak unto you as unto Spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto Babes in Christ: I have fed you with Milk and not with strong meat, for hitherto you have not been able to bear it, neither yet*

now

now are you able. 1 Cor. 3. 1, 2. The Apostle considered not onely the knowledge that he had in the mysteries of Christ; but the temper, the growth, and strength of the Churches, and accordingly kept back, or communicated to them, what might be for their profit. *Act* 20. 18, 19, 20. So Christ, *I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.* It may be some will count these old and threadbare texts; but such must know, that the word of the Lord must stand for ever. *Isa.* 40. 8. And I should dare to say to such: if the best of thy new shifts, be to slight, and abuse old Scriptures; It shewes thou art more fond of thy unwarrantable opinion, then swift to hear, and ready to yield to the authority that is infallible. But to conclude this, when we attempt to force our Brother beyond his light, or to break his heart with grief, to thrust him beyond his Faith, or to bar

bar him from his priviledge: how can we say, I love? What shall I say? To have fellowship one with another for the sake of an outward circumstance, or to make that the door to fellowship which God hath not; yea to make that the including, excluding charter: The bounds, bar, and rule of Communion, whereby the word of the everlasting testament there is no warrant for it; to speak charitably: If it be not for want of Love, it is for want of knowledge in the mysteries of the Kingdom of Christ. Strange! Take two Christians equal in all points but this, nay let one go beyond the other far, for grace and holyness; yet this circumstance of Water shall drown and sweep away all his excellencies, not counting him worthy of that reception, that with hand and heart shall be given a novice in religion, because he conforms to Water.

Eighthly,

Eighthly, But for Gods people to divide into parties, or to shut each other from Church-communion; though from greater points, and upon higher pretences, then this of Water-baptism; *hath heretofore been counted carnal, and the actors herein babish Christians*: *Paul* and *Apollo*, *Cephas*, and *Christ* were doubtless higher things then those about which we contend: yet when they made divisions for them; *how sharply are they rebuked*? Are ye not *Carnall*, *Carnall*, *Carnall*? For whereas there are among you, envyings, strife, divisions, or factions: *are you not carnall*? 1 Cor. 1. 11, 12, chap. 3. 1, 2, 3, 4. While one saith I am of *Paul*, and another I am of *Apollo*; *are you not carnall*? See therefore from whence arise all thy indeavours, zeal and labour to accomplish divisions, among the Godly; Let *Paul* or *Cephas*, or Christ himself be the burthen of thy song, yet

yet the heart from whence they flow *is carnall*, and thy actions, *discoveries of childishness*. But doubtless when these contentions were among the Corinthians? and one man vilifyed that another might be promoted; *a list with a carnall Brother, was thought great wisedom to widen the breach.* But why should he be rebuked, that said he was for Christ? because he was for him in opposition to his holy Apostles. Hence he saith, *Is Christ divided*, or separate from his servants. Note therefore that these divisions are deserted by the persons the divisions were made about; Neither *Paul* nor *Apollo*, nor *Cephas*, nor *Christ* is here. Let the cry be never so loud, Christ, order, the rule, the command, or the like; Carnality is but the bottom, and they are but babes that do it; their zeal is but a puffe, 1 *Cor.* 4. 6. And observe it, the great division at Corinth, was helped forward by Water-baptism:

That

This the *Apoſtle* intimates by; *Were ye Baptized in the name of* Paul? *Ah Brethren! Carnall Chriſtians with outward circumſtances, will if they be let alone, make ſad work in the Churches of Chriſt, againſt the ſpiritual growth of the ſame. But I thank God*, ſaith Paul, *that I Baptized none of you*, &c. Not, but that it was then an ordinance of God, but they abuſed it, in making parties thereby. I Baptized none of you, but *Criſpus* and *Gaius, and the houſhold of Stephanus*; men of note among the Brethren, men of good judgement, and reverenced by the reſt; they can tell you I intended not to make a party to my ſelf thereby. *Beſides I know not whether I Baptized any other.* By this negligent relating, who were Baptized by him; he ſheweth that he made no ſuch matter of Baptiſm, as ſome in theſe dayes do; nay, that he made no matter at all thereof,

with respect to Church-communion; for if he did not heed who himself had Baptized; he much less heeded, who were Baptized by others; but if Baptism had been the initiating or entering ordinance, and so appointed of God; no doubt he had made more conscience thereof, then so lightly to pass it over. *For Christ sent me not to Baptize, but to Preach the Gospel.* The Gospel then may be effectually preached, and yet Baptism neither administred nor mentioned. The Gospel being good tidings to sinners, upon the account of free grace through Christ; but Baptism with things of like nature, are dutyes injoyned such a people who received the Gospel before: I speak not this, because I would teach men to break the least of the Commandments of God; but to perswade my brethren of the Baptized way, not to hold too much thereupon, not to make it an essential of the

Gospel

Gospel of Christ, nor yet of communion of Saints. *He sent me not to Baptize*: These words are spoken with holy indignation against them that abuse this ordinance of Christ. So when he speaketh of the Ministers themselves, which also they had abused; in his speaking, he as it were, trampleth upon them; as if they were nothing at all. *Who then is Paul? and who is Apollo?* He that planteth is not any thing; neither is he that watereth: *but God that giveth the increase:* 1 Cor. 3. 5: 7. Yet for all this, the Ministers and their ministry are a glorious appointment of God in the World. Baptisme also is a holy ordinance, but when Sathan abuseth it, and wrencheth it out of its place; making that which was ordained of God, for the edification of believers; the only weapon to break in pieces, the love, the unity, the concord of Saints; then *what is Baptism*; then *neither is Baptism any thing* And

this is no new doctrine; For God by the mouth of his Prophets of old, cryed out against his own institutions, when abused by his people: *To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices to me? saith the Lord, I am full of burnt offerings, of rams, and the fat of fed Beasts: I delight not in the blood of Bullocks, or of Lambs, or of he Goats: When you come to appear before me, Who hath required these things at your hands, to tread my Courts?* Bring no more vain oblations, *incense is an abomination to me: The new Moons and the Sabbaths, and the calling of assemblyes, I cannot away with, it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting. Your new Moons, and your appointed Feasts my Soul hateth, they are a trouble to me, my Soul hateth, I am even weary to bear them.* Isa. 1. 11, 12, 13, 14. And yet all these were his own appointments. But why then did he thus abhor them? Because they retained the evil of their

doings

doings, and uſed them as they did other of his appointments. viz. *For ſtrife and debate, and to ſtrike with the fiſt of wickedneſs.* chap. 58. 4. Wherefore when that of God, that is great, is overweighed by that which is ſmall; it is the wiſedom of them that ſee it, to put load to the other end of the ſcale; untill the things thus abuſed, poiſe in their own place. But to paſs this, and proceed.

Ninthly, If we ſhall reject viſible Saints by calling, Saints that have communion with God; that have received the Law, at the hand of Chriſt, that are of holy converſation among men; they deſiring to have communion with us, as much as in us lyeth, we take from them their very priviledge, and the bleſſings to which they are born of God: For *Paul* ſaith, not only to the gathered Church at Corinth, but to all ſcattered Saints that in every place call

upon the name of the Lord: *That Jesus Christ is theirs, That Paul and Apollo, and the World, and Life, and Death, and all things are theirs,* because they are Christs, and Christ is Gods. But saith he, let no man glory in men, such as *Paul* and *Cephas*, though these were excellent: because this priviledge comes to you upon another bottom, even by Faith of Jesus Christ. *Drink you all of this*, is intailed to Faith, not Baptism: Nay Baptized persons may yet be excluded this; when he that discerneth the Lords body hath right, and priviledge to it. 1 *Cor.* 11. 28, 29. But to exclude Christians from Church communion, and to debar them their Heaven-born priviledges, for the want of that which yet God never made a wall of division between us.

1. This looks too like a *Spirit of persecution.* Job. 19. 25, 26, 27, 28.

2. It

2. It respecteth more a *form, then the spirit*, and power of Godliness. 2 *Tim.* 3. 5.

3. This is to make Laws, where God hath made none, and to be wise above what is written; contrary to Gods word, and our own principles.

4. It is a directing of the Spirit of God.

5. It bindeth all mens Faith and light to mine opinion.

6. It taketh away the Childrens Bread.

7. It withholdeth from them the increase of Faith.

8. It tendeth to harden the hearts of the wicked.

9. It tendeth to make wicked the Hearts of weak Christians.

10 It setteth open a door to all temptations

11. It tempteth the Divel to fall upon those that are alone, and have none to help them.

12. It is the Nursery of all vain jangliugs, backbitings, and strangenes among the Christians.

13. It occasioneth the World to reproach us.

14. It holdeth staggering consciences, in doubt of the right way of the Lord.

15. It giveth Occasion to many to turn aside to most dangerous heresies.

16. It abuseth the holy Scriptures; It wresteth Gods ordinances out of their place.

17. It is a Prop to Antichrist.

18. Shall I add, It is not that which greatly prevailed to bring down these judgments, which at present we feel and groan under; I will dare to say, it was the cause thereof.

Tenthly, and Lastly. Bear with one word farther: What greater contempt can be thrown upon the Saints; then for their Brethren to cast

cast them off, or to debar them Church-communion? Think you not that the World may groundly say, Some great iniquity lyes hid in the skirts of your Brethren, when in truth the transgression is yet your own? But I say what can the Church do more to the sinner or open prophane? Civil commerce you will have with the worst, and what more have you with these? Perhaps you will say we can pray and Preach with these, and hold them Christians, Saints, and Godly. Well but let me ask you one word farther: Do you believe, that of very conscience, they cannot consent, as you, to that of Water-baptism? And that if they had light therein, they would as willingly do it as you? Why then as I have shewed you our refusal to hold communion with them is without a ground from the word of God.

But can you commit your Soul to their Ministry, and joyne with

them in Prayer; and yet not count them meet for other Gospel p ivi-ledges? I would know by what Scripture you do it? Perhaps you will say I commit not my Sou to their Ministry, only hear them occasionally for tryall. If this be all the respect thou hast for them and their Ministry, thou mayest have as much for the worst that pisseth against the Wall. But if thou canst hear them as Gods Ministers. and sit under their Ministry as Gods ordinance; then shew me where God hath such a Gospel Ministry, as that the persons Ministring, may not though desiring it, be admitted with you to the closest communion of Saints. But if thou sittest under their Ministry for fleshly politick ends; thou heareſt the word like an Atheist, and art thy self, while thou judgest thy Brother, in the practise of the worst of men. But I say, where do you find this

peice-

peicemeal communion with, meſt that profeſs Faith and Holyneſs as you, and ſeparation from the World.

If you object that my Principles lead me to have communion with all; I anſwer with all as afore deſcribed; if they will have communion with me.

Object. Then you may have communion with the members of Antichriſt.

Anſw. If there be a viſible Saint yet remaining in that Church; let him come to us, and we will have communion with him.

Queſt. What! Though he yet ſtand a member of that ſinfull number, and profeſs himſelf one of them?

Anſw. You ſuppoſe an impoſſibility; For it cannot be that at the ſame time, a man ſhould viſibly ſtand a member of two bodys, diametrically oppoſite one to another Wherefore it muſt be ſuppoſed

posed; that he who professeth himself a member of a Church of Christ; must forthwith, nay before, forsake the Antichristian one. The which if he refuseth to do, it is evident he doth not sincerely desire to have fellowship with the Saints.

But he saith he cannot see that that company to which you stand oppofite, and conclude Antichristian, is indeed the Antichristian Church.

If so: he cannot desire to joyn with another, if he know them to be professedly, and directly oppofite.

I hold therefore to what I said at first; That if there be any Saints in the Antichristian Church, my heart, and the door of our Congregation is open to receive them, into closest fellowship with us.

Object.

Object. But how if they yet retain some Antichristian principles?

Answ. If they be such as eat out the bowels of a Church, so soon as they are detected, he must be either be kept out, while out, or cast out, if in: For it must be the prudence of every community, to preserve its own unity with peace and truth: The which the Churches of Christ may do; and yet as I have shewed already, receive such persons as differ upon the point of Water-baptism: For the doing or not doing of that, neither maketh nor marreth, the bowels or foundation of Church communion.

Object. But this is receiving for opinion sake, as before you said of us.

Answ. No, We receive him for the sake of Christ, and grace, and for our mutual edification in the Faith

Faith; and that we respect not opinions, I mean in lesser matters, 'tis evident; for things wherein we differ are no breach of communion among us; We let every man have his own Faith in such things to himself before God.

I now come to a short Application.

1, Keep a strict separation, I pray you, from communion with the open prophane; and let no man use his liberty in Church relation, as an occasion to the flesh; but in Love serve one another; Looking diligently least any root of bitterness (any poisonsull herb. *Deut.* 29. 18.) springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled And let those that before were reasons for my separation; be motives to you maintain the like: and remember that when men have said what they can for a sinfull mixture

mixture in the worship of God, the arm of the Lord is made bare against it.

2. In the midst of your zeal for the Lord, remember that the visible Saint is his; and is priviledged in all those spiritual things, that you have in the word, and live in the practise of, and that he is to partake thereof, according to his light therein. Quarrel not with him about things that are circumstantial; but receive him in the Lord as becometh Saints; if he will not have communion with you, the neglect is his, not yours. But saith the open prophane; Why cannot we be reckoned Saints also? We have been Christened, we go to Church, we take the Communion. Poor People! This will not do; for so long as in Life and Conversation you appear to be open prophane; we cannot unless we sin, receive you into our fellowship:

For

For by your ungodly lives you ſhew that you know not Chriſt; and while you are ſuch by the word, you are reputed but Beaſts: Now then judge your ſelves, if it be not a ſtrange community that conſiſteth of men and Beaſts: Let Beaſts be with the Beaſts, you know your ſelves do ſo; you receive not your Horſe nor your Hog to your Table; you put them in a room by themſelves Beſides I have ſhewed you before, that for many reaſons we cannot have communion with you.

1. The Church of God muſt be Holy. *Lev.* 11. 44. *chap* 19 2. *chap* 20. 7. 1 *Pet.* 1. 15, 16. *Iſa.* 26. 2. *Pſa.* 128. 20 *Ezek.* 43. 12. *chap.* 44. 9. *Iſa.* 52. 1.

2. The example of the Churches of Chriſt before, hath been a community of viſible Saints. *Rom.* 1. 7. 1 *Cor.* 1. 2. *Eph.* 1. 1, 2. *Col.*

Col. 1. 1. 1 *Thes.* 1. 1, 2. 2 *Thes.* 1. 1. Poor carnal man, there are many other reasons urged in this little book, that shew why we cannot have communion with thee: Not that we refuse of pride or stoutness, or because we scorn you as men: No, we pity you, and pray to God for you; and could if you were converted, with joy receive you to fellowship with us: Did you never read in *Daniel*, *That Iron is not mixed with miry Clay?* Dan. 2. 43. No more can the Saints with you, in the worship of God, and fellowship of the Gospel. When those you read of in the fourth of *Ezra*, attempted to joyn in Temple work with the children of the captivity; what said the children of *Judah?* you have nothing to do with us, to build an house to the Lord our God; but we our selves together will build unto the Lord God

of

of *Israel. &c. Ezra.* 4 1, 2, 3.

I return now to those that are visible Saints by Calling, that stand at a distance one from another, upon the accounts before specifyed: Brethren: Close; Close; Be one as the Father and Christ is one.

1. This the way to convince the World that you are Christs, and the Subjects of one Lord; whereas the contrary makes them doubt it. *Joh.* 13. 34, 35. *Joh.* 17. 23.

2. This is the way to increase Love; that Grace so much desired by some, and so little enjoyed by others. 2 *Cor.* 7. 14, 15.

3. This is the way to savour and taste the Spirit of God in each others experience; for which if you find it in truth you cannot but bless (if you be Saints) the name our Lord Jesus Christ. 1 *Thes.* 1. 2, 3, 4.

4. This

4. This is the way to increase knowledge, or to see more in the word of God: for that may be known by two; that is not seen by one. *Isa.* 52. 8.

5. This is the way to remove secret jealousies, and murmurings one against the other; yea this is the way to prevent much sin, and greatly to frustrate that design of hell, *Prov.* 6. 16, 17, 18, 19.

6. This is the way to bring them out of the World into fellowship, that now stand off from our Gospel priviledges, for the sake of our vain janglings,

7. This is the way to make Antichrist shake, totter and tumble. *Isa* 11. 13, 14.

8. This is the way to leave *Babylon*, as an habitation for Divels only; and to make it an hold for foul Spirits, and a cage only for every unclean and hatefull bird.

9. This is the way to hasten the work

work of Christs Kingdom in the World; and to forward his coming to the eternal judgment.

10. And this is the way to obtain much of that Well done, Good and Faithfull Servant, when you stand before his face.

I beseech you Brethren suffer the word of exhortation; for I have written a Letter unto you in few words. *Heb*, 13. 22.

FINIS.